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INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 002616

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PO](#)
SUBJECT: PORTUGAL ON UNGA EMERGENCY SPECIAL SESSION
REF: SECSTATE 188244

Classified By: POL CHIEF TROY FITRELL, REASONS 1.4 (B,D)

¶1. (C) Summary: Portugal in particular, and the EU in general, will seek to make the ESS resolution on Israeli actions a more balanced text rather than oppose it directly. Should the EU achieve its goal to amend the text, member states will then try to achieve consensus on how to vote. End summary.

¶2. (C) Portuguese Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) Director for International Political Organizations, Helena Paiva, told us that they agree that the reftel draft resolution is unbalanced and unacceptable in its current form. The Portuguese policy, however, is to work with the proponents of the text to improve its balance and utility, such that the European Union can achieve a consensus on whether to support it. Such unity, Paiva noted, is a major goal in itself, given that the Middle East is among the most difficult issues for the EU on which to achieve consensus.

¶3. (C) Paiva told us that the Finnish delegation, acting within the current EU presidency, was already negotiating with proponents of the text. Paiva noted that specific mention of the instigating rocket attacks and of the right to self-defense were critical issues for Portugal and the EU. Paiva commented that the final text will not be perfect, but that the EU was searching for a reasonable and acceptable text. Only upon achieving such a text would the EU states enter into the second step to decide how they would vote.

¶4. (C) In regard to whether an Extraordinary Special Session (ESS) should have been called at all, Paiva suggested that the issue had been overtaken by events. The ESS had been called, the Portuguese and other delegations were already engaged, and the issue now was to achieve the best text possible. Departing from the specific topic, Paiva opined that the atmosphere at the United Nations had become far too confrontational, which limited the body's ability to achieve progress on major issues.
Hoffman